

Safe guarding seed in Western Australia - Preparing for a new threat

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Western Australia possesses a diverse flora which faces a wide range of threats, one of the biggest being *Phytophthora. Puccinia psidii* or Myrtle rust, currently on the east coast of Australia, is a potential future threat to Western Australia's flora were it to be introduced into the state. Seed conservation plays an important role safeguarding threatened species from extinction. A conservation seed bank, the Threatened Flora Seed Centre, was established in 1992 to collect and conserve seed of species potentially threatened by *Phytophthora*. This seed bank now forms part of the Western Australian Seed Centre and is the primary repository for seed of conservation significant plant species in WA. In 2020 a project commenced collecting species which will potentially be threatened by Myrtle Rust if it were to become established in WA.

Bio

Andrew Crawford is the manager of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions' Western Australian Seed Centre, Kensington. Andrew has been involved with the collection of Australian native plant species for over 30 years, with 20 years spent collecting and conserving seed of Western Australia's conservation significant plant species. Andrew's work covers all aspects of the seed conservation process; from seed collection and processing, to seed storage and testing, generating plants for translocations, as well as seed focused research aiding in threatened species management and recovery.